



City of Seattle

Greg Nickels, Mayor

US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement

How many mayors have signed the Agreement?

As of January 29, 2006, 201 mayors representing over 41million Americans in 38 states and Washington, D.C.

What does the Agreement do?

Mayors who sign on to the Agreement are making a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their own cities and communities to 7% below 1990 levels by 2012 through actions like increasing energy efficiency, reducing vehicle miles traveled, maintaining healthy urban forests, reducing sprawl and promoting use of clean, renewable energy resources. The Agreement also calls for Congress to pass legislation that sets meaningful timelines and limits on emissions through a flexible, market-based system of tradable allowances among emitting industries.

What does the USCM Resolution do?

The Resolution endorsed the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and urges all mayors to participate. It calls for a strong partnership between the USCM and the ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability to help the growing number of participating cities implement the Agreement, and to track progress. The Resolution also encourages the federal government to assist cities in sharing best practices on local climate protection programs.

What's happened since the USCM meeting?

Cities throughout the country are working on climate action measures – from starting greenhouse gas inventories to implementing measures to reduce global warming pollution. In addition to the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, there's been a lot of other activity:

- Late in 2005, countries that are part of the Kyoto Accord met in Montreal at the major international conference on climate change and made a renewed commitment to meeting their targets. There was a lot of interest by the international community in the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.
- Governor Schwarzenegger (R-CA) announced an ambitious target and plan to reduce global warming pollution in California 11% by 2010, 25% by 2020, and 80% by 2050. If California were a country, it would rank 10th worldwide in greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Northeastern States Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) agreed to a seven state cap-and-trade program for greenhouse gas emissions.
- Major business leaders, including several Fortune 500 Companies like GE and DuPont, have made strong commitments to clean energy and emissions reductions.

Why is this agreement important to mayors?

- They recognize that action on climate change is urgent, as cities throughout the US are already feeling the impacts of climate change. For instance, more intense and frequent storms and sea level rises are causing dangerous coastal flooding, and hydroelectric capacity and water supplies are less stable.
- Nine of the ten hottest years on record occurred in the last decade. People turn to their local governments first for help during droughts, dangerous heat waves, floods, and wildfires.
- Many actions that reduce global warming pollution provide additional benefits that are important to the quality of life in American cities, including cleaner air, decreased dependence on imported oil and gas, healthy urban forests and reduced energy bills.
- Mayors know that taking action now reduces the impacts – and costs – of climate change.
- Now is the time for reducing emissions to avoid even more significant global climate disruption. The US is nearly alone among industrialized countries in lacking a national policy and program on climate protection.

Visit www.seattle.gov/mayor/climate for more information,
including participation forms, media coverage, and climate resource links.

What They're Saying

Mayors

"We're trying to do two things with the climate change agreement. The first is to generate local strategies for reducing greenhouse emissions. The second is to show support for these issues at the local level so that national leaders have the political support they need to do their part."

—Greg Nickels, Seattle, WA.

"This is not only an environmental issue, but also an economic development and sustainability issue. By protecting our environment, we are protecting our resources and preserving them for future generations to come."

—Joy Cooper, Hallandale Beach, FL

Media

"The mayors, both Democrats and Republicans, believe that the growing threat of global warming necessitates immediate action.... The mayors who signed the treaty believe the time has come to confront the issue of global warming and feel the treaty will not have deleterious effects on the economy."

—PBS NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, August 8, 2005

"The fact that there's a bandwagon at all is noteworthy, and the timing is fortuitous. As the Senate deliberates a number of bipartisan climate amendments that have been proposed for the energy bill, mayors from New York City to Salt Lake City are sending a powerful message to D.C. lawmakers that America wants action on global warming."

—Grist Magazine, June 15, 2005

Ignoring inaction at the highest levels of the U.S. government, 145 mayors across the country have formed a coalition to combat global warming and begun to reshape their cities using innovative programmes and technologies.

—Inter Press Service News Agency, July 19, 2005

"Despite the Bush administration's resistance to the Kyoto global warming pact, more than 130 U.S. mayors have applied the agreement's standards in a bid to reduce America's carbon dioxide emissions."

—ABC News, May 16, 2005

"Between them they represent almost 29m citizens spread across 35 states. But they are joined by the idea that even if the federal government will not sign-up to Kyoto, a difference can be made at a local level. Across the country, the shift in policies... is already underway."

—The New Zealand Herald, May 17, 2005

Others

"Even the states are not as accelerated as the cities. I know where the power is, and I know it's with you guys."

—New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson speaking to mayors about climate initiatives